(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps Government would take to protect the energy needs of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) India has been pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through the Iran-Pakistan- India (IPI) transnational gas pipeline.

(c) and (d) During visit of US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice to India in March 2005, she informed the media that the US had conveyed its concerns on the proposed gas pipeline cooperation between India and Iran. The US legal position on this issue flows from its Iran- Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) of 1996 that provides for the imposition of sanctions against foreign companies that make an investment of more than US $ 20 million in one year in Iran's energy sector.

(e) Government is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran in national interest in order to meet the energy requirements of the country.

Production in ONGC's Assam fields

396. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the crude production from the ONGC's Assam fields are showing a declining trend;

(b) whether ONGC has firmed up a contract with US -based Haliburton for deployment of cutting edge technology used worldwide, to enhance crude production from its Assam fields; and

(c) whether ONGC has weighed the negative aspects of insurgency/militancy prevailing in the region while making additional investment in Assam fields?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir

However, continuous efforts are being made by Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) to maintain and enhance the production.

(b) Yes, Sir

The contract for technical study, technological induction and operational services delivery has been signed between Assam Asset of ONGC and Halliburton Offshore Services Inc. (HOSI) during April, 2007 for production optimization, reservoir management activities and to enhance the oil production in major oil fields of Assam Asset.

(c) ONGC has been producing oil in Assam for the last forty years. Environmental problems are taken up at different levels of State Govt. and resolved with joint discussions/actions.

However, ONGC is concentrating all its resources to maintain and augment production from Assam fields. .